

THE HAPPY DUTY OF DAILY PRAISE

NO. 1902

A SERMON
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*"I will extol thee, my God, O King; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever.
Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever."
Psalm 145:1-2.*

IF I were to put to you the question, "Do you pray?" the answer would be very quickly given by every Christian person, "Of course I do." Suppose I then added, "And do you pray every day?" the prompt reply would be, "Yes, many times in the day. I could not live without prayer." This is no more than I expect, and I will not put the question. But let me change the inquiry, and say, "Do you bless God every day? Is praise as certain and constant a practice with you as prayer?" I am not sure that the answer would be quite so certain, so general, or so prompt. You would have to stop a little while before you gave the reply, and I fear, in some cases, when the reply did come, it would be, "I am afraid I have been negligent in praise."

Well, then, dear friend, have you not been wrong? Should we omit praise any more than we omit prayer? And should not praise come daily and as many times in the day as prayer does? It strikes me that to fail in praise is as unjustifiable as to fail in prayer. I shall leave it with your own heart and conscience, when you have asked and answered the question, to see to it in the future that far more of the sweet frankincense of praise is mingled with your daily oblation of devotion.

Praise is certainly not at all as common in family prayer as other forms of worship. We cannot all of us praise God in the family by joining in song, because we are not all able to raise a tune, but it would be well if we could. I agree with Matthew Henry when he says, "They that pray in the family do well, they that pray and read the Scriptures do better, but they that pray, and read, and sing do best of all." There is a completeness in that kind of family worship which is much to be desired.

Whether in the family or not, yet personally and privately, let us endeavor to be filled with God's praise and with His honor all the day. Be this our resolve—"I will extol thee, my God, O King; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever. Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever."

Brethren, praise cannot be a second-class business, for it is evidently due to God, and that in a very high degree. A sense of justice ought to make us praise the Lord, it is the least we can do, and in some senses it is the most that we can do, in return for the multiplied benefits which He bestows upon us. What, no harvest of praise for Him who has sent the sunshine of His love and the rain of His grace upon us! What, no revenue of praise for Him who is our gracious Lord and King! He does not exact from us any servile labor, but simply says, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me." Praise is good, and pleasant, and delightful. Let us rank it among those debts which we would not wish to forget, but are eager to pay at once.

Praise is an act which is pre-eminently characteristic of the true child of God. The man who does but pretend to piety will fast twice in the week, and stand in the temple and offer something like prayer, but to praise God with all the heart, this is the mark of true adoption, this is the sign and token of a heart received by divine grace. We lack one of the surest evidences of pure love to God if we live without presenting praise to His ever-blessed name.

Praising God is singularly beneficial to ourselves. If we had more of it we should be greatly blessed. What would lift us so much above the trials of life, what would help us to bear the burden and heat of the day, so well as songs of praise unto the Most High? The soldier marches without weariness when the band is playing inspiring strains, the sailor, as he pulls the rope or lifts the anchor, utters a cheery cry to aid his toil, let us try the animating power of hymns of praise. Nothing would oil the wheels of the chariot of life so well as more of the praising of God.

Praise would end murmuring, and nurse contentment. If our mouths were filled with the praises of God, there would be no room for grumbling. Praise would throw a halo of glory around the head of toil and thought. In its sunlight the commonest duties of life would be transfigured. Sanctified by prayer and praise, each duty would be raised into a hallowed worship, akin to that of heaven. It would make us more happy, more holy, and more heavenly, if we would say, “I will extol thee, my God, O King.”

Besides, brethren, unless we praise God here, are we preparing for our eternal home? There all is praise, how can we hope to enter there if we are strangers to that exercise? This life is a preparatory school and in it we are preparing for the high engagements of the perfected. Are you not eager to rehearse the everlasting hallelujahs?

*“I would begin the music here,
And so my soul should rise:
Oh, for some heavenly notes to bear
My passions to the skies!”*

Learn the essential elements of heavenly praise by the practice of joyful thanksgiving, adoring reverence, and wondering love, so that, when you step into heaven, you may take your place among the singers, and say, “I have been practicing these songs for years. I have praised God while I was in a world of sin and suffering, and when I was weighed down by a feeble body, and now that I am set free from earth and sin, and the bondage of the flesh, I take up the same strain to sing more sweetly to the same Lord and God.”

I wish I knew how to speak so as to stir up every child of God to praise. As for you that are not His children—oh, that you were such! You must be born again, you cannot praise God aright till you are. “Unto the wicked, God says, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?” You can offer Him no real praise while your hearts are at enmity to Him. Be you reconciled to God by the death of His Son, and then you will praise Him. Let no one that has tasted that the Lord is gracious; let no one that has ever been delivered from sin by the atonement of Christ, ever fail to pay unto the Lord his daily tribute of thanksgiving.

To help us in this joyful duty of praise we will turn to our text, and keep to it. May the Holy Spirit instruct us by it!

I. In our text we have first of all THE RESOLVE OF PERSONAL LOYALTY—“I will extol thee, my God, O King.”

David personally comes before his God and King, and utters this deliberate resolution that he will praise the divine majesty forever.

Note here, first, that *he pays homage to God as his King*. There is no praising God aright if we do not see Him upon the throne, reigning with unquestioned sway. Disobedient subjects cannot praise their sovereign. You must take up the Lord’s yoke—it is easy, and His burden, which is light. You must come and touch His silver scepter and receive His mercy, and own Him to be your rightful Monarch, Lawgiver, and Ruler. Where Jesus comes, He comes to reign, where God is truly known, He is always known as supreme. Over the united kingdom of our body, soul, and spirit the Lord must reign with undisputed authority. What a joy it is to have such a King! “O King,” says David, and it seems to have been a sweet morsel in his mouth. He was himself a king after the earthly fashion, but to him God alone was King. Our King is no tyrant, no maker of cruel laws. He demands no crushing tribute or forced

service, His ways are ways of pleasantness, and all His paths are peace. His laws are just and good, and in the keeping of them there is great reward. Let others exult that they are their own masters, our joy is that God is our King. Let others yield to this or that passion, or desire, as for us, we find our freedom in complete subjection to our heavenly King. Let us, then, praise God by loyally accepting Him as our King, let us repeat with exultation the hymn we just now sang—

***“Crown Him, crown Him,
King of kings, and Lord of lords.”***

Let us not be satisfied that He should reign over us alone, but let us long that the whole earth should be filled with His glory. Be this our daily prayer—“Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.” Let this be our constant ascription of praise—“For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.”

Note that the Psalmist, also, in this first sentence, *praises the Lord by a present personal appropriation of God to himself by faith*, “I will extol thee, my God.” That word “my” is a drop of honey, nay, it is like Jonathan’s wood, full of honey, it seems to drip from every bough, and he that comes into it stands knee-deep in sweetness. “My God” is as high a note as an angel can reach. What is another man’s god to me? He must be my God or I shall not extol Him.

Say, dear heart, have you ever taken God to be your God? Can you say with David in another place, “This God is our God for ever and ever. He shall be our guide, even unto death”? Blessed was Thomas when he bowed down, and put his finger into the print of his Master’s wounds, and cried, “My Lord and my God.” That double-handed grip of appropriation marked the death of his painful unbelief.

Can you say, “JEHOVAH is my God?” To us there are Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but these are one God, and this one God is our own God. Let others worship whom they will, this God our soul adores and loves, yea, claims to be her personal possession. O Beloved, if you can say, “My God,” you will be bound to exalt Him! If He has given Himself to you so that you can say, “My Beloved is mine,” you will give yourself to Him, and you will add, “And I am His.” Those two sentences, like two silken covers of a book, shut in within them the full score of the music of heaven.

Observe that David is *firmly resolved to praise God*. My text has four “I wills” in it. Frequently it is foolish for us poor mortals to say “I will,” because our will is so feeble and fickle, but when we resolve upon the praise of God, we may say, “I will,” and “I will,” and “I will,” and “I will,” till we make a solid square of determinations. Let me tell you you will have need to say “I will” a great many times, for many obstacles will hinder your resolve.

There will come depression of spirit, and then you must say, “I will extol thee, my God, O King.” Poverty, sickness, losses, and crosses may assail you, and then you must say, “I will praise thy name for ever and ever.” The devil will come and tell you that you have no interest in Christ, but you must say, “Every day will I bless thee.” Death will come, and perhaps you will be under the fear of it, then it will be incumbent upon you to cry, “And I will praise thy name for ever and ever.”

***“Sing, though sense and carnal reason
Fain would stop the joyful song:
Sing, and count it highest treason
For a saint to hold his tongue.”***

A bold man took this motto—“While I live I’ll crow,” but our motto is, “While I live I’ll praise.” An old motto was, “*Dum spiro spero*,” but the saint improves upon it, and cries, “*Dum expiro spero*.” Not only while I live I will hope, but when I die I will hope, and he even gets beyond all that, and determines—“Whether I live or die I will praise my God.” “O God, my heart is fixed, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise.”

While David is thus resolute, I want you to notice that *the resolution is strictly personal*. He says, “I will extol thee.” Whatever others do, my own mind is made up. David was very glad when others praised God, he delighted to join with the great congregation that kept holy day, but still he was attentive to his own heart and his own praise. There is no selfishness in looking well to your own personal state and condition before the Lord. He cannot be called a selfish citizen who is very careful to render his own personal suit and service to his king.

A company of persons praising God would be nothing unless each individual was sincere and earnest in the worship. The praise of the great congregation is precious in proportion as each individual, with all his heart, is saying, “I will extol thee, my God, O King.” Come, my soul, I will not sit silent, because so many others are singing, however many songsters there may be, they cannot sing for me, they cannot pay my private debt of praise, therefore awake, my heart, and extol your God and King.

What if others refuse to sing, what if a shameful silence is observed in reference to the praises of God, then, my heart, I must bestir you all the more to a double diligence, that you may with even greater zeal extol your God and King! I will sing a solo if I cannot find a choir in which I may take my part. Anyhow, my God, I will extol Thee. At this hour men go off to other lords, and they set up this and that new-made god, but as for me, my ear is bored to JEHOVAH’S doorpost, I will not go out from His service forever. Bind the sacrifice with cords, even with cords to the horns of the altar. Whatever happens, I will extol Thee, my God, O King.

Now brothers and sisters, have you been losing your own personality in the multitude. As members of a great church, have you thought, “Things will go on very well without me”? Correct that mistake, each individuality must have its own note to bring to God. Let Him not have to say to you, “*Thou* hast bought me no sweet cane with money; neither have *thou* filled me with the fat of *thy* sacrifices.” Let us not be slow in His praise, since He has been so swift in His grace.

Once more upon this head, while David is thus loyally resolving to praise God, you will observe that *he is doing it all the time*. For the resolution to praise can only come from the man who is already praising God. When he says, “I will extol thee,” he is already extolling. We go from praise to praise. The heart resolves, and so plants the seed, and then the life is affected, and the harvest springs up and ripens. O brethren, do not let us say, “I will extol thee tomorrow,” or, “I will hope to praise You when I grow old, or when I have less business on hand.” No, no, you are this day in debt, this day own your obligation.

We cannot praise God too soon. Our very first breath is a gift from God, and it should be spent to the Creator’s praise. The early morning hour should be dedicated to praise, do not the birds set us the example? In this matter he gives twice who gives quickly. Let your praise follow quickly upon the benefit you do receive, lest even during the delay you be found guilty of ingratitude. As soon as a mercy touches our coasts, we should welcome it with acclamation. Let us copy the little chick, which, as it drinks, lifts up its head, as if to give thanks. Our thanksgiving should echo the voice of divine loving-kindness. Before the Lord our King, let us continually rejoice as we bless Him, and speak well of His name.

Thus, then, I have set before you the resolve of a loyal spirit. Are you loyal to your God and King? Then I charge you to glorify His name. Lift up your hearts in His praise, and in all manner of ways, make His name great. Praise Him with your lips, praise Him with your lives, praise Him with your substance, praise Him with every faculty and capacity. Be inventive in methods of praise, “sing unto the LORD a new song.” Bring forth the long-stored and costly alabaster box, break it, and pour the sweet nard upon your Redeemer’s head and feet. With penitents and martyrs extol Him! With prophets and apostles extol Him! With saints and angels extol Him! Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised.

II. And now I must conduct you to the second clause of the text, which is equally full and instructive. We have in the second part of it THE CONCLUSION OF AN INTELLIGENT APPRECIATION, “And I will bless thy name for ever and ever.” Blind praise is not fit for the all-seeing God. God forbade of old the bringing of blind sacrifices to His altar. Our praise ought to have a brain as

well as a tongue. We ought to know who the God is whom we praise, hence David says, “I will bless *thy name*,” by which he means—Thy character, Thy deeds, Thy revealed attributes.

First, observe that *he presents the worship of inward admiration*, he knows, and therefore he blesses the divine name. What is this act of blessing? Sometimes “bless” would appear to be used interchangeably with “praise,” yet there is a difference, for it is written, “All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee.” You can praise a man, and yet you may never bless him. A great artist, for instance, you may *praise* him, but he may be so ungenerous to you and others that it may never occur to you to *bless* him. Blessing has something in it of love and delight. It is a nearer, dearer, heartier thing than *praise*. “I will bless thy name,” that is to say—“I will take an intense delight in thy name, I will lovingly rejoice in it.”

The very thought of God is a source of happiness to our hearts, and the more we muse upon His character the more joyous we become. The Lord’s name is love. He is merciful and gracious, tender and pitiful. Moreover, He is a just God, and righteous, faithful, and true, and holy. He is a mighty God, and wise and unchanging. He is a prayer-hearing God, and He keeps His promise evermore. We would not have Him other than He is. We have a sweet contentment in God as He is revealed in Holy Scripture.

It is not everybody that can say this, for a great many professors nowadays desire a god of their own making and shaping. If they find anything in Scripture concerning God which grates upon their tender susceptibilities, they cannot abide it. The God that casts the wicked from His presence forever—they cannot believe in Him, they therefore make unto themselves a false deity, who is indifferent to sin. All that is revealed concerning God is to me abundantly satisfactory, if I do not comprehend its full meaning, I bow before its mystery. If I hear anything of my God which does not yield me delight, I feel that therein I must be out of order with Him, either through sin or ignorance, and I say, “What I know not, teach Thou me.”

I doubt not that perfectly holy and completely instructed beings are fully content with everything that God does, and are ready to praise Him for all. Do not our souls even now bless the Lord our God, who chose us, redeemed us, and called us by His grace? Whether we view Him as Maker, Provider, Savior, King, or Father, we find in Him an unfathomable sea of joy.

He is God, our exceeding joy. Therefore we sit down in holy quiet, and feel our soul saying, “Bless the Lord! Bless the Lord!” He is what we would have Him to be. He is better than we could have supposed or imagined. He is the crown of delight, the climax of goodness, the sum of all perfection. As often as we see the light, or feel the sun, we would bless the name of the Lord.

I think when David said, “I will bless thy name,” he meant that *he wished well to the Lord*. To bless a person means to do that person good. By blessing us what untold benefits the Lord bestows! We cannot bless God in such a sense as that in which He blesses us, but we would if we could. If we cannot give anything to God, we can desire that He may be known, loved, and obeyed by all our fellow men. We can wish well to His kingdom and cause in the world. We can bless Him by blessing His people, by working for the fulfillment of His purposes, by obeying His precepts, and by taking delight in His ordinances.

We can bless Him by submission to His chastening hand, and by gratitude for His daily benefits. Sometimes we say with the Psalmist, “O my soul, thou hast said unto the LORD, Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee; but to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.” Oh, that I could wash Jesus Christ’s feet! Is there a believer here, man or woman, but would aspire to that office? It is not denied you, you can wash His feet by caring for His poor people, and relieving their wants.

You cannot feast your Redeemer, He is not hungry, but some of His people are, feed them! He is not thirsty, but some of His disciples are. Give them a cup of cold water in the Master’s name, and He will accept it as given to Himself. Do you not feel today, you that love Him, as if you wanted to do something for Him? Arise, and do it, and so bless Him. It is one of the instincts of a true Christian to wish to do something for his God and King, who has done everything for him. He loved me, and gave

Himself for me, should I not give myself for Him? Oh, for perfect consecration! Oh, to bless God by laying our all upon His altar, and spending our lives in His service!

It seems, then, dear friends, that David *studied the character and doings of God*, and thus praised Him. Knowledge should lead our song. The more we know of God the more acceptably shall we bless Him through Jesus Christ. I exhort you, therefore, to acquaint yourselves with God. Study His holy Book. As in a mirror you may here see the glory of the Lord reflected, especially in the person of the Lord Jesus, who is in truth the Word, the very name of the Lord. It would be a pity that we should spoil our praises by ignorance, they that know the name of the Lord will trust Him and will praise Him.

It appears from this text that David *discovered nothing after a long study of God which would be an exception to this rule*. He does not say, “I will bless thy name in all but one thing. I have seen some point of terror in what thou hast revealed of thyself, and in that thing I cannot bless thee.” No, without any exception he reverently adores and joyfully blesses God. All his heart is contented with all of God that is revealed. Is it so with us, beloved? I earnestly hope it is.

I beg you to notice *how intense he grows over this*—“I will bless thy name for ever and ever.” You have heard the quaint saying of “for ever and a day”? Here you have an advance upon it, it is “forever,” and then another “forever.” He says, “I will bless thy name for ever.” Is not that long enough? No, he adds, “and ever.” Are there two forevers, two eternities? Brethren, if there were fifty eternities we would spend them all in blessing the name of the Lord our God. “I will bless thy name for ever and ever.” It would be absurd to explain this hyperbolical expression. It runs parallel with the words of Addison, when he says—

*“Through all eternity to Thee
My song of joy I’ll raise;
But oh, eternity’s too short
To utter all Thy praise!”*

Somebody caviled at that verse the other day. He said, “Eternity cannot be too short.” Ah, my dear friend, you are not a poet, I can see, but if you could get just a spark of poetry into your soul, literalism would vanish. Truly, in poetry and in praise the letter kills. Language is a poor vehicle of expression when the soul is on fire, words are good enough things for our cool judgement, but when thoughts are full of praise they break the back of words.

How often have I stood here and felt that if I could throw my tongue away, and let my heart speak without these syllables and arbitrary sounds, then I might express myself! David speaks as if he scorned to be limited by language. He must leap over even time and possibility to get room for his heart. “I will bless thy name for ever and ever.” How I enjoy these enthusiastic expressions! It shows that when David blessed the Lord he did it heartily. While he was musing the fire burned. He felt like dancing before the ark. He was in much the same frame of mind as Dr. Watts when he sang—

*“From Thee, my God, my joys shall rise
And run eternal rounds,
Beyond the limits of the skies,
And all created bounds.”*

III. But time will fail me unless I pass on at once to the third sentence of our text, which is, THE PLEDGE OF DAILY REMEMBRANCE.

Upon this I would dwell with very great earnestness. If you forget my discourse, I would like you to remember this part of the text. “Every day will I bless thee.” I will not do it now and have done with it, I will not take a week of the year in which to praise You, and then leave the other fifty-one weeks silent, but “every day will I bless thee.” All the year round will I extol my God. Why should it be so?

The greatness of the gifts we have already received demands it. We can never fully express our gratitude for saving grace, and therefore we must keep on at it. A few years ago we were lost and dead,

but we are found and made alive again. We must praise God every day for this. We were black as night with sin, but now we are washed whiter than snow, when can we leave off praising our Lord for this? He loved me and gave Himself for me, when can the day come that I shall cease to praise Him for this?

Gethsemane and the bloody sweat, Calvary and the precious blood, when shall we ever have done with praising our dear Lord for all He suffered when He bought us with His own heart's blood? No, if it were only the first mercies, the mercy of election, the mercy of redemption, the mercy of effectual calling, the mercy of adoption, we have had enough to begin with to make us sing unto the Lord every day of our lives. The light which has risen upon us warms all our days with gladness, it shall also light them up with praise.

Today it becomes us to sing of the mercy of yesterday. The waves of love as well as of time have washed us up upon the shore of today, and the beach is strewn with love. Here I find myself on a Sunday morning exulting because another six days work is done, and strength has been given for it. Some of us have experienced a world of loving-kindness between one Sabbath and another. If we had never had anything else from God but what we have received during the last week, we have overwhelming reason for extolling Him today. If there is any day in which we would leave off praising God, it must not be the Lord's day, for

*“This is the day the Lord hath made,
He calls the hours His own;
Let heaven rejoice, let earth be glad,
And praise surround the throne.”*

Oh, let us magnify the Lord on the day of which it can be said—

*“Today He rose and left the dead,
And Satan's empire fell;
Today the saints His triumphs spread,
And all His wonders tell.”*

When we reach tomorrow shall we not praise God for the blessing of the Sabbath? Surely you cannot have forgotten the Lord so soon as Monday! Before you go out into the world, wash your face in the clear crystal of praise. Bury each yesterday in the fine linen and spices of thankfulness.

Each day has its mercy and should render its praise. When Monday is over, you will have something to praise God for on Tuesday. He that watches for God's hand will never be long without seeing it. If you will only spy out God's mercies, with half an eye you will see them every day of the year. Fresh are the dews of each morning, and equally fresh are its blessings. “Fresh trouble,” says one. Praise God for the trouble, for it is a richer form of blessing. “Fresh care,” says one. Cast all your care on Him who cares for you, and that act will in itself bless you. “Fresh labor,” says another. Yes, but fresh strength, too.

There is never a night but what there comes a day after it, never an affliction without its consolation. Every day you must utter the memory of His great goodness.

If we cannot praise God on any one day for what we have had that day, *let us praise Him for tomorrow.* “It is better on before.” Let us learn that quaint verse—

*“And a new song is in my mouth,
To long-lived music set—
Glory to Thee for all the grace
I have not tasted yet.”*

Let us forestall our future, and draw upon the promises. What if today I am down; tomorrow I shall be up! What if to-day I cast ashes on my head, tomorrow the Lord shall crown me with loving-kindness!

What if today my pains trouble me, they will soon be gone! It will be all the same a hundred years hence, at any rate, and so let me praise God for what is within measurable distance. In a few years I shall be with the angels, and be with my Lord Himself. Blessed be His name! Begin to enjoy your heaven now. What says the apostle? “For our citizenship is in heaven”—not is to be, but is. We belong to heaven now, our names are enrolled among its citizens, and the privileges of the New Jerusalem belong to us at this present moment. Christ is ours, and God is ours!

*“This world is ours, and worlds to come;
Earth is our lodge, and heaven our home.”*

Wherefore let us rejoice and be exceedingly glad, and praise the name of God this very day.

“Every day,” says he, “will I bless thee.” *There is seasonableness about the praising of God every day.* Praise is in season every month. You awoke, the sunlight streamed into the windows, and touched your eyelids, and you said, “Bless God. Here is a charming summer’s day.” Birds were singing, and flowers were pouring out their perfume, you could not help praising God.

But another day it was dark at the time of your rising, you struck a match, and lit your candle. A thick fog hung like a blanket over all. If you were a wise man, you said, “Come, I shall not get through the day if I do not make up my mind to praise God. This is the kind of weather in which I must bless God, or else go down in despair.” So you woke yourself up, and began to adore the Lord.

One morning you awoke after a refreshing night’s rest, and you praised God for it, but on another occasion you had tossed about through a sleepless night, and then you thanked God that the weary night was over.

You smile, dear friends, but there is always some reason for praising God. Certain fruits and meats are in season at special times, but the praise of God is always in season. It is good to praise the Lord in the daytime, how charming is the lark’s song as it carols up to heaven’s gate! It is good to bless God at night—how delicious are the liquid notes of the nightingale as it thrills the night with its music! I do therefore say to you right heartily, “Come, let us together praise the Lord, in all sorts of weather, and in all sorts of places.”

Sometimes I have said to myself, “During this last week I have been so full of pain that I am afraid I have forgotten to praise God as much as I should have done, and therefore I will have a double draught of it now. I will get alone, and have a special time of thankful thought. I would make up some of my old arrears, and magnify the Lord above measure. I do not like feeling that there can ever be a day in which I have not praised Him. That day would surely be a blank in my life.

Surely the sweetest praise that ever ascends to God is that which is poured forth by saints from beds of languishing. Praise in sad times is praise indeed. When your dog loves you because it is dinnertime, you are not sure of him, but when somebody else tempts him with a bone, and he will not leave you, though just now you struck him, then you feel that he is truly attached to you. We may learn from dogs that true affection is not dependent upon what it is just now receiving.

Let us not have a cupboard love for God because of His kind providence, but let us love Him and praise Him for what He is, and what He has done. Let us follow hard after Him when He seems to forsake us, and praise Him when He deals hardly with us, for this is true praise. For my part, though I am not long without affliction, I have no faults to find with my Lord, but I desire to praise Him, and praise Him, and only to praise Him. Oh, that I knew how to do it worthily! Here is my resolve—“I will extol thee, my God, O King; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever. Every day will I bless thee.”

IV. The last sentence of the text sets forth, THE HOPE OF ETERNAL ADORATION.

David here exclaims, “And I will praise thy name for ever and ever.”

I am quite sure when David said that, *he believed that God was unchangeable*, for if God can change, how can I be sure that He will always be worthy of my praise? David knew that what God had been, He was, and what He was then He would always be. He had not heard the sentence, “Jesus Christ

the same yesterday, and today, and for ever,” nor yet that other, “I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed,” but he knew the truth contained in both these texts, and therefore he said, “I will praise thy name forever and ever.” As long as God is, He will be worthy to be praised.

Another point is also clear; *David believed in the immortality of the soul*. He says, “I will praise thy name for ever and ever.” That truth was very dimly revealed in the Old Testament, but David knew it right well. He did not expect to sleep in oblivion, but to go on praising, and therefore he said, “I will praise thy name for ever and ever.” No cold hand fell upon him, and no killing voice said to him, “You shall die, and never praise the Lord again.” Oh, no, he looked to live forever and ever, and praise forever and ever!

Brethren, such is our hope, and we will never give it up. We feel eternal life within our souls. We challenge the cold hand of death to quench the immortal flame of our love, or to silence the ceaseless song of our praise. The dead cannot praise God, and God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. Among the living we are numbered through the grace of God, and we know that we shall live because Jesus lives.

When death shall come, it shall bring no destruction to us, though it shall change the conditions of our existence, it shall not change the object of our existence. Our tongue may be silenced for a little while, but our spirit, unaffected by the disease of the body, shall go on praising God in its own fashion, and then, by and by, in the resurrection, even this poor tongue shall be revived, and body, soul, and spirit shall together praise the God of resurrection and eternal glory. “I will praise thy name for ever and ever.”

We shall never grow weary of this hallowed exercise forever and ever. It will always be new, fresh, delightful. In heaven they never require any change beyond those blessed variations of song, those new melodies which make up the everlasting harmony. On and on, forever telling the tale which never will be fully told, the saints will praise the name of the Lord forever and ever.

Of course, dear friends, David’s resolve was that, *as long as he was here below* he would never cease to praise God, and this is ours also. Brethren, we may have to leave off some cherished engagements, but this we will never cease from. At a certain period of life a man may have to leave off preaching to a large congregation. Good old John Newton declared that he would never leave off preaching while he had breath in his body, and I admire his holy perseverance, but it was a pity that he did not leave off preaching at St. Mary Woolnoth, for he often wearied the people, and forgot the thread of his discourse. He might have done better in another place.

Ah, well, we may leave off preaching, but we shall never leave off praising! The day will come when you, my dear friend, cannot go to Sunday school, I hope you will go as long as you can toddle there, but it may be you will not be able to interest the children, your memory will begin to fail, but even then you can go on praising the Lord. And you will. I have known old people almost forget their own names, and forget their own children, but I have known them still remember their Lord and Master. I have heard of one, who lay dying, and his friends tried to make him remember certain things, but he shook his head. At last one said, “Do you remember the Lord Jesus?” Then the mind came into full play, the eyes brightened, and the old man eloquently praised his Savior. Our last gasp shall be given to the praise of the Lord.

When once we have passed through the iron gate, and forded the dividing river, then we will begin to praise God in a manner more satisfactory than we can reach at present. After a nobler sort we will sing and adore. What soarings we will attempt upon the eagle wings of love! What plunges we will take into the crystal stream of praise! I think, for a while, when we first behold the throne, we shall do no more than cast our crowns at the feet of Him that loved us, and then bow down under a weight of speechless praise. We shall be overwhelmed with wonder and thankfulness. When we rise to our feet again, we will join in the strain of our brethren redeemed by blood, and only drop out of the song when again we feel overpowered with joyful adoration, and are constrained again in holy silence to shrink to nothing before the infinite, unchanging God of love.

Oh, to be there! To be there soon! We may be much nearer than we think. I cannot tell what I shall do, but I know this, I want no other heaven than to praise God perfectly and eternally. Is it not so with you? A heart full of praise is heaven in the bud, perfect praise is heaven full-blown. Let us close this discourse by asking grace from God that, if we have been deficient in praise, we may now mend our ways, and put on the garments of holy adoration. This day and onward be our watchword “Hallelujah! Praise ye the Lord!”

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—PSALM 145

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—100 (PART 2), 333, 148 (SONG 1)

Taken from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.